

## **Staff Report – Agenda Items 5A and 5B**

# **General Plan and Environmental Impact Report and Naming For the unnamed State Historic Park known as Cowell Ranch/John Marsh**

## **I. RECOMMENDATION**

California State Parks recommends that the Commission certify the Final Environmental Impact Report for the unnamed state historic park property currently known as Cowell Ranch/John Marsh, and adopt the proposed resolution to approve the General Plan for this park.

California State Parks also recommends that the Commission adopt the proposed resolution to name this park property Los Meganos State Park.

## **II. INTRODUCTION**

### **Background**

The park consists of 3,659 acres adjacent to the City of Brentwood in eastern Contra Costa County. The park is approximately 10 miles east of Mount Diablo State Park (see Figures 1 and 2 on pages 10 & 11 of this report). The park contains substantial open space consisting of rolling hills and valleys, grasslands, vernal pools, riparian habitat, the historic John Marsh house and its historic ranching landscape, and extensive and significant pre-historic archaeological sites. East Bay Regional Park District currently operates 10 acres of the park as a trailhead and entry for the District's Round Valley Regional Preserve. The remainder of the park has not been open to the public and currently lacks visitor facilities.

The park property was acquired over multiple years. In 1981 California State Parks acquired the John Marsh homestead lands (16.4 acres), which included the John Marsh stone house and ranch complex, from Contra Costa County. The stone house, the most prominent structure in the landscape, was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1971. The surrounding historic landscape was found eligible for the National Register in 2007. Pre-historic archaeology dating to nearly 7,000 years in the past has been identified and extensively researched within the park.

The remainder of the park's approximately 3,643 acres was transferred to California State Parks from the Trust for Public Land (purchased from the S.H. Cowell Foundation) in 2003. Funding for this later acquisition was provided by the State Coastal Conservancy, California Department of Fish and Game, Caltrans, the Wildlife Conservation Board, and the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation, to provide for the conservation and protection of the property's significant biological resources, particularly the vernal pools and riparian habitat. These acres of rolling hillsides, grasslands, vernal pools, and riparian habitat are remnants of the over 13,000 acre Rancho Los Meganos (also known as Rancho de los Meganos), the Mexican land grant that included the current park property. The rancho was named for the sand dunes that once existed along the rancho's delta shoreline.

### **Purpose and Vision**

The park's purpose is to celebrate a rich pre-historic and historic presence and contribute to the existing regional open space network of eastern Contra Costa County. When the park was classified in May 2007, the Commission declared that this will be a historic park with recreation as the primary use.

The central focal area of the park will be the Primary Historic Zone, encompassing both the significant pre-historic resources and the historically significant John Marsh house and ranching landscape. Park interpretive programs will highlight the pre-historic resources that focus on the Indian cultures that occupied the land for thousands of years. The Marsh house and surrounding ranch will be rehabilitated for a range of visitor and other adaptive uses, including education, interpretation, special events, and overnight accommodation.

The park will provide educational and recreational opportunities for local, regional and statewide visitors, while enhancing existing habitat. It will be integral in the regional open space network and will connect with other adjacent park and open space properties through a trail network that will provide local and regional mixed-use trail opportunities. The trail network will be integrated with day use picnic areas and interpretive facilities. Overnight accommodations will be provided, including camping opportunities and the possibility of overnight facilities within the Marsh house. Opportunities for special events and concessions will be available in designated visitor use zones.

The scenic quality of the open landscape and the important plants, animals, and wildlife habitats will be protected. Park management will be focused on balancing cultural and natural resource protection with public access opportunities and recreation activities in cooperation with the City of Brentwood and other public entities.

### **Inventory of Features and Resource Summary**

A detailed description of the inventory of features and resource summary can be found in the Preliminary General Plan and Draft Program Environmental Impact Report for Cowell Ranch/John Marsh State Historic Park under Chapter 2, Existing Conditions, beginning on page 2-1 (page 33 of the digital (PDF) general plan/EIR). The following is a brief description of some of the more significant resources at the park.

**Pre-historic Resources:** The archaeological resources found in the park are some of the most unique and important in the State Park System. Research has indicated that the first human inhabitants occupied the area at least 7,000 years ago. At about 4,000 years ago the Windmill culture appears at Marsh Creek. The Windmill people represent one of the most sophisticated and advanced pre-historic cultures in aboriginal California. They lived up and down the Central Valley, with their heartland being the Delta Region. The Windmill occupation eventually gave way to what is now called the Meganos culture that carried on a variant of the Windmill culture until about 1,000 years ago. Extensive evidence of all these ancient peoples exists at the park.

**Historic Resources:** The John Marsh house (built in 1856) is historically and architecturally significant as an early example of sophisticated residential architecture built in California during the decade of statehood. The house is an excellent example of the Gothic villa style of residential architecture which was popular in the east and Midwest during the middle of the 19th century. The house and immediate ranch surroundings are important features of the rancho culture and subsequent development that dominated much of California after the secularization of the mission lands during the 1830s through the 1870s. The house and associated landscape are historically significant for their associations with a prominent early Californian, John Marsh, and for associations with several important historical themes in the development of the state, including frontier settlement, cattle ranching during the American period, and river commerce on the Sacramento and San Joaquin rivers.

**Natural Resources:** The park represents a significant amount of open space in a region that has recently experienced tremendous development. The park's grasslands, rolling hills

with scattered oaks, creeks, and vernal pools serve as essential wildlife corridors and are habitat for an unusually high density of rare and endangered plant and animal species. Marsh Creek, originating in the foothills of nearby Mount Diablo, is the prominent waterway within the park as it flows to the San Joaquin River Delta.

### III. PREVIOUS COMMISSION ACTIONS

The State Park and Recreation Commission officially classified the 3,659 acre park in May 2007. The property was classified as a state historic park to recognize the significant cultural resources contained in the unit, including the significant Native American archaeological site, the John Marsh home, and the once typical rural landscape that is rapidly disappearing throughout California. The state historic park designation also provides opportunities to develop visitor facilities such as camping, day use picnicking, trails and adaptive use of the Marsh house.

The property has not been officially named (see section VI of this document on page 5).

### IV. PUBLIC INPUT PROCESS

Throughout the general planning process, public input has been received on all aspects of the park, including classification and appropriate names. A variety of methods, including public meetings, agency stakeholder meetings, surveys, newsletters, and tours of the park property, were used to reach out to stakeholders and to identify their desires and concerns for the park's future. A mailing list with approximately 500 entries was compiled and used to update interested members of the public, government agencies, and other stakeholders regarding the planning process and public meetings. Public meetings were conducted in May 2006, March 2007 and November 2010, and agency stakeholder meetings took place in July 2006 and December 2006. The naming of the park was discussed at all public meetings held during preparation of the unit's General Plan.

Public tours of the property were conducted on October 12, 14, and 25, 2006. These land tours provided an opportunity for interested parties to see the landscape surrounding the Marsh house and other parts of the property not open to the public.

The public was also invited to inform the park planning by reviewing draft planning documents available on-line at the California State Parks website, or by contacting California State Parks directly via mail, e-mail, facsimile, or phone.

#### Partnerships and Stakeholders

There are several primary stakeholders who have an interest in the planning, development and naming of this new park. They include:

The **City of Brentwood**, which has been working with California State Parks in planning for trail connections and recreational opportunities as well as education and interpretation of the John Marsh house. The City partnered with State Parks and the John Marsh Historic Trust and applied for California Cultural Historic Endowment (CCHE) grant funding for the stabilization of the John Marsh house. The City also contributed a substantial amount of funding (\$350,000) for preparation of the General Plan.

The **John Marsh Historic Trust** has worked in cooperation with State Parks in raising funds for the stabilization and restoration of the John Marsh house. The Trust currently is funding the continued stabilization of the John Marsh House through the California Cultural and Historical Endowment grant program. The Trust supported the state historic park classification and would like the park name to include "John Marsh."

**East Bay Regional Park District** (EBRPD) owns the adjacent 2,024-acre Round Valley Regional Preserve, which includes hiking, biking, and equestrian trails. EBRPD leases and operates a portion of the state park property for use as a staging area providing access to the Preserve. Morgan Territory Regional Preserve (4,000 acres, with connections to Round Valley Regional Preserve and Mount Diablo State Park) is another EBRPD open space/outdoor recreation property with potential trail connectivity to the park through Round Valley Regional Preserve.

**Save Mount Diablo** is a local nonprofit group actively involved in open space preservation, acquisition, stewardship, trail connections, and natural resource protection. They were involved in the purchase of the 3,643 acres of the park.

**Native California Indians** participated in the planning process. Participants with connections to this region include members of the Trina Marine Ruano Family of Ohlone Indians, including Ramona Garibay, the Native American Heritage Council-designated Most Likely Descendent. These parties have requested that the park name include “Meganos” to recognize the significant archaeological site where their ancestors, ancient people who have a long history on this land, lived and are buried.

The **State Coastal Conservancy**, **California Department of Fish and Game**, **Caltrans**, the **Wildlife Conservation Board**, and the **U.S. Bureau of Reclamation** provided acquisition funding (through the Trust for Public Land) for the majority of the current park property with the goal of natural resource protection and preservation.

## **V. PROJECT DESCRIPTION – GENERAL PLAN**

### **Management Zones**

There are five sub-areas within four management zones: The **Historic area** (the Marsh house and immediate surroundings), the **Eastern area** (the eastern edge of the park consisting primarily of former farmland and grassland), the **Round Valley area** (the southwestern corner of the park, containing the existing Round Valley Staging Area and Miwok Trailhead, currently leased to East Bay Regional Park District), the **Briones Valley area** (the western and central area of the park), and the **Dry Creek area** (the northwest corner of the park, adjacent to the Vineyards at Marsh Creek residential development) (see Figure 3 on page 12).

Within these park sub-areas, the General Plan includes future land uses, activities, facilities and associated management strategies that are organized into **four management zones: Visitor Facility, Natural Resource, Primary Historic, and Operations & Maintenance** (see Figure 3 and Figure 4 on pages 12 and 13).

**Visitor Facility Zone:** 924 acres<sup>1</sup> (approx. 25% of the park). This zone includes five sub-zones – Historic Area, Eastern Area, Round Valley Area, Briones Valley, and Dry Creek. The intent is to provide visitors with developed recreational facilities and services, centered around the park’s vehicular access points. The amount of facility development and use intensity varies by sub-zone and can include a visitor center, day use picnic areas, trailheads, trails, equestrian facilities/activities/events, parking, special event areas, and campsites (including equestrian, group, and hike-in sites). Key proposals of the five subzones are:

**Historic area** key proposals - Rehabilitation of the John Marsh house (visitor center, overnight accommodations, staff offices), 10-to-15 day use picnic sites, group gathering

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<sup>1</sup> Some management zones overlap and therefore the total area will not equal the total property acreage.

area, special events, restrooms, trail connections, and parking/staging for 30-to-50 vehicles (including accommodations for two buses).

**Eastern area** key proposals - Visitor center, 50-to-150 developed campsites, 3 group camps, 3-to-5 hike-in campsites, 20-to-30 day use picnic sites, parking/staging for 30-to-50 vehicles, equestrian facilities/activities/events, and accommodations for special events (including a potential farmers market).

**Round Valley area** key proposals - 30-to-50 developed campsites (10 equestrian), 3-to-5 hike-in campsites, 10-to-20 day use picnic sites (2 group sites), and parking/staging for 20-to-30 vehicles.

**Briones Valley area** key proposals - 3-to-5 day use picnic sites, vault toilets, and parking/staging for 8-to-10 vehicles.

**Dry Creek area** key proposals - Vault toilets and parking/staging for 5-to-8 vehicles.

**Primary Historic Zone:** 63.4 acres (approximately 1.7% of the park). This zone includes the John Marsh home and many significant archaeological resources. A high concentration of multi-layered historic, pre-historic and cultural landscape elements have been identified in this area. The intent of the zone is to educate visitors regarding the pre-historic and historic resources of the park while also ensuring that these resources are protected and restored. The primary historic zone also includes visitor facilities and operations. Trail, day use and lodging facilities in this zone will provide for visitor uses such as hiking, mountain biking, horseback riding, guided walks, picnicking, and overnight facilities where they can be accommodated without significant impact. Proposals include restoring and rehabilitating the farmstead for visitor use and education, and the potential for trails from the farmstead and parking area that will extend to Briones Valley and the Eastern Hills areas.

**Natural Resource Zone:** 2,559.2 acres (approximately 70% of the park). The largest zone in the park, it is located in Briones Valley and the Eastern Hills and contains many of the sensitive natural resources within the park. This zone is essentially the interior portion of the park and contains the majority of the rolling hills and wide expanses of open space, providing outstanding views of the surrounding area. The purpose of this zone is to protect and enhance the sensitive natural resources of the park, including the riparian corridor along Marsh Creek, Briones Valley, and associated habitats, and the hills to the east. There are minimal facilities proposed in this zone. Multi-use trails will allow visitors to explore this zone's grasslands and oak savannah.

**Operations and Maintenance Zone:** 320.6 acres (approximately 9% of the park). This zone focuses on park operations and maintenance and also includes staff housing. A ranger station, offices/conference area, and storage of maintenance material/equipment, vehicular and historic materials will also be included within this zone. Adaptive re-use of existing buildings is emphasized.

## **VI. ISSUES AND ANALYSIS**

### **1. Determining the Park Name**

During development of the General Plan, the working name for the park was Cowell Ranch/John Marsh State Historic Park. State law (Public Resources Code Section 5019.59) dictates that "Historical units shall be named to perpetuate the primary historical theme of the individual units." The following are the California State Parks recommended name and other names that were suggested or considered.

### **Recommended Name: Los Meganos State Park** (classified as a State Historic Park)

The recommended name ties all of the properties and history together, from the ancient peoples inhabiting the land, early settlement on the large land grant rancho, through the John Marsh era to today. This name represents:

- The archaeological designation for the Early Horizon culture (*Meganos*) revealed in the Marsh Creek deposits and in the Meganos soil type. This is part of an extremely significant archaeological site including the significant Windmiller culture from 7,000 years ago and located in the park.
- The majority of the 3,659 acre park property, originally part of a larger Mexican land grant called Rancho Los Meganos (or Rancho de los Meganos). Significant biological resources exist on this original land grant property.
- Connections with John Marsh, an early pioneer who purchased Rancho Los Meganos in 1837 and developed his ranch and stone house on a portion of the property.
- A name that is known and associated with eastern Contra Costa County. Meganos (sometimes also “medanos”) is a Spanish term meaning “sand hills” or “sand dunes,” referring to the sand dunes in the region.

Native California Indians who participated in the planning process have requested that the park name include “Meganos” to acknowledge the long history of Native American culture and occupation of this site. Preference for this name is shared by State Parks Archaeology, History and Museums Division as well as local State Parks staff.

This name would acknowledge the significant native cultures that occupied the site for thousands of years, while also recognizing the Mexican land grant and the park’s historic period. The John Marsh house would remain a focal point for the John Marsh settlement and surrounding archaeological site, with the remainder of the property preserved as recreational open space and wildlife habitat reflecting the enormous size of the original ranchos. While recognizing the historical significance of the name of the area, this name does not specifically give the impression that ranching or grazing will continue to occur on the property.

### **Rancho Los Meganos State Park or Los Meganos Rancho State Park**

This was the historic name for the José Noriega Land Grant through the John Marsh occupancy of the property. The inclusion of the term “rancho” in the name may create a misleading expectation of what visitors will find here. The park’s proposed general plan (page 2-52) cites the California State Parks Operations Manual policy in dictating that livestock grazing is an inappropriate use of parkland resources except under certain circumstances where core park purposes are served (see #4, Grazing, on page 8 of this report).

### **John Marsh State Historic Park**

For many years under State Parks ownership the property was referred to as the John Marsh home, or John Marsh property, because the initial property acquisition included only the Marsh house and surrounding 16.4 acres. Subsequent discoveries of extensive Native American burials have added to the richness of the story of human occupation of this site. The later substantial property acquisition (3,643 acres – over 99 percent of the park property) and the park’s extensive archeological resources containing significant natural habitat and open space would not be recognized with the name John Marsh State Park.

The John Marsh Historic Trust has requested that the name “John Marsh” be included in the official name of the park to recognize this early pioneer. They have organized a campaign for the park to be called “John Marsh State Historic Park.” The John Marsh Historic Trust

was instrumental in designating the name of the new Highway 4 bypass the “John Marsh Heritage Highway.” Marsh Creek, the park’s primary waterway, is also named after Marsh.

### **Marsh Creek State Park**

Marsh Creek is a topographic feature that runs through the park. It is the site of thousands of years of native occupation as well as the historic John Marsh homestead. The John Marsh stone house, also located along Marsh Creek, is a connection to California’s early Euro-American settlement and agriculture. Marsh Creek also suggests the natural resources, values and wildlife habitats that continue to be important elements of this state historic park. This name does not acknowledge the Native American heritage/occupancy, nor does it recognize the Spanish/Mexican ownership of the property.

### **Pioneer State Park**

This name, suggested by former State Senator Tom Torlakson, acknowledges the early California pioneers to this area. It does not name John Marsh specifically, although he was perhaps the earliest U.S.-born pioneer at this site in what is now Contra Costa County. Senator Torlakson was a strong advocate of the park and supported the subsequent acquisition of property. This name does not acknowledge the Native American heritage/occupancy, the Spanish/Mexican ownership, the pre-historic cultural landscape, or the significant biological resources, open space, and scenic values of the park.

### **Cowell Ranch State Park**

This name suggests the latest park acquisition, consisting of a portion of the larger Cowell Ranch property. Although this name has been used during the development of the General Plan, it has not been otherwise commonly identified with this property. This name does not recognize the significant Native American sites/culture or John Marsh’s occupancy and contributions to the property, nor does it recognize the park’s extensive natural resources.

## **2. Adjacent property owners and proposed Dry Creek Visitor Facilities**

There is large residential development, the Vineyards at Marsh Creek, adjacent to the northern park boundary. During much of the general plan effort, this property was not developed; however, homes are now built and occupied. This area is adjacent to the Dry Creek Visitor Facility Zone (See Figure 3 on page 12). Some of the new residents have expressed concern that park facilities may be developed near their homes and within their viewshed, creating potential park visitor trespass, safety issues, and increased traffic in or near their neighborhoods. These proposals were discussed with the residents who attended the latest public meeting during the review period for the General Plan and EIR.

The Dry Creek Visitor Facility Zone proposes minimal visitor facilities, limited to a small parking/staging area (5-to-8 vehicle maximum) and vault toilets. A visitor center is not proposed in this area. This general area was chosen as a visitor access and trailhead site because it is on the periphery of the park and there is existing road access, eliminating the need for additional road development inside the park. The exact locations of visitor facilities have not been determined.

California State Parks regards adjacent private property as an important consideration when planning for specific facilities and activities for the public. State Parks will work in cooperation with adjacent property owners to minimize their concerns. The General Plan includes goals and guidelines that emphasize park management’s commitment to provide adequate staff for safety and law enforcement, safe and well-signed access and egress, emergency access, and visitor management.

### **3. Natural Resource protection and proposed facilities in the Briones Valley**

The Briones Valley is recognized as an area containing a high density of sensitive plant communities, important wildlife habitat, and special-status plants and animals. This area provides habitat for at least a dozen special-status wildlife species including vernal pool fairy shrimp, California tiger salamander, burrowing owl, golden eagle, and San Joaquin kit fox. The vernal pool and valley sink scrub habitats present are rare and important habitats supporting rare plants such as the San Joaquin spearscale. The majority of the Briones Valley is contained in the Natural Resource Zone (approximately 1,963 acres of the valley in the Natural Resources Zone), with visitor facilities limited to trails. A small area of the Valley along the eastern park boundary is proposed as a visitor facility zone (170.9 acres). The General Plan proposes minimal, low-impact visitor facilities in this area, limited to a parking/staging area (8-to-10 vehicles), day use picnicking (3-to-5 sites), vault toilets, and interpretive information. The exact location of these facilities has not been determined, but would potentially be near the existing roads (Deer Valley Road or Briones Valley Road) to minimize additional road development within the park.

The federal Bureau of Reclamation and California Department of Fish and Game expressed concern that the sensitive resources in the Briones Valley will not be protected with the addition of these minimal visitor facilities. The General Plan contains numerous goals and guidelines that will provide for the protection and preservation of sensitive species and habitats. Implementation of the General Plan and associated management of park resources (including interpretation of the sensitive natural resources) are expected to provide benefits to resource protection and visitor use, reflecting the dual mandate in the mission of California State Parks to “preserve the State’s extraordinary biological diversity, protecting its most valued natural and cultural resources, and creating opportunities for high quality outdoor recreation.” All future development will be carefully sited to consider impacts to sensitive habitats and species and minimize alterations to the surrounding natural environmental and ecosystem functioning.

### **4. Grazing**

A number of comments on the Preliminary General Plan and Draft Program EIR were related to cattle grazing in the park. Some comments expressed support for cattle grazing as a vegetation management tool or interpretive element, while others felt that grazing was detrimental to the natural resources in the park. Some comments pointed out that research exists that supports grazing as being beneficial to some special-status grassland and vernal pool species.

The State Park and Recreation Commission’s policy is that livestock grazing is generally incompatible with park purposes (Policy II.6, Agricultural Leasing – see page 15 of this report). California State Parks policy (Department Operations Manual, Chapter 0300, Section 0317.2.4.1) states that livestock grazing is an inappropriate use of parkland resources except under certain circumstances where a core park purpose is served. The General Plan and EIR note that livestock grazing may be permitted under the following circumstances: a) when directly contributing to the historic interpretation approved in a unit’s General Plan; b) when necessary for a specific natural resource restoration purpose, which normally does not include fuels reduction or an alternative to extirpated ungulate grazing; or c) when it is a necessary component to an acquisition agreement.

Grazing has historically occurred on the park property and there is a current grazing lease that will be allowed to continue pending preparation of a State Parks vegetation manage-



ment plan. As part of the vegetation management plan, grazing will be evaluated along with a variety of grassland management tools (prescribed burning, mowing, etc.). If grazing is determined to be an effective management tool for vegetation and ecosystem management consistent with park policies, then it may be adopted as an on-going management strategy in the park.

## **5. The Vineyards at Marsh Creek**

The Vineyards at Marsh Creek is a neighboring development being constructed by Shea Homes LLC. This development is the subject of litigation brought by State Parks and the Office of the Attorney General in 2008 for damages and trespass that occurred on the park property. Nothing in the proposed actions by the Commission is anticipated to be impacted by this litigation.

## **VII. COMPLIANCE WITH THE CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT**

The General Plan is considered a project for the purposes of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). California State Parks is the lead agency for the preparation and certification of the Final EIR. The EIR is considered a programmatic EIR. Future projects may require additional project-specific environmental analysis.

The EIR did not identify any impacts that have the potential to be significant impacts. Impacts will be avoided or minimized through implementation of the goals and guidelines proposed as part of the project.

## **VIII. OTHER LEGAL ISSUES**

There are no known legal issues relating to the Commission's approval of the General Plan or name for this park.

## **IX. FISCAL IMPACTS**

No immediate fiscal impacts will result from approval of this General Plan/EIR or name.

Financial strategies for developing the park include funding a trail program through trail-specific grants and other mechanisms, development of the Marsh house and surrounding elements in cooperation with the City of Brentwood, private contributions, and historic preservation grants, development of the Eastern Hills visitor facilities in partnership with a concessionaire, and continued operation of the Round Valley area by East Bay Regional Park District.

## **X. FIGURES & ATTACHMENTS**

**Figure 1:** Location Map

**Figure 2:** Site Map

**Figure 3:** Land Use and Management Zones/Alternative C (Preferred Alternative)

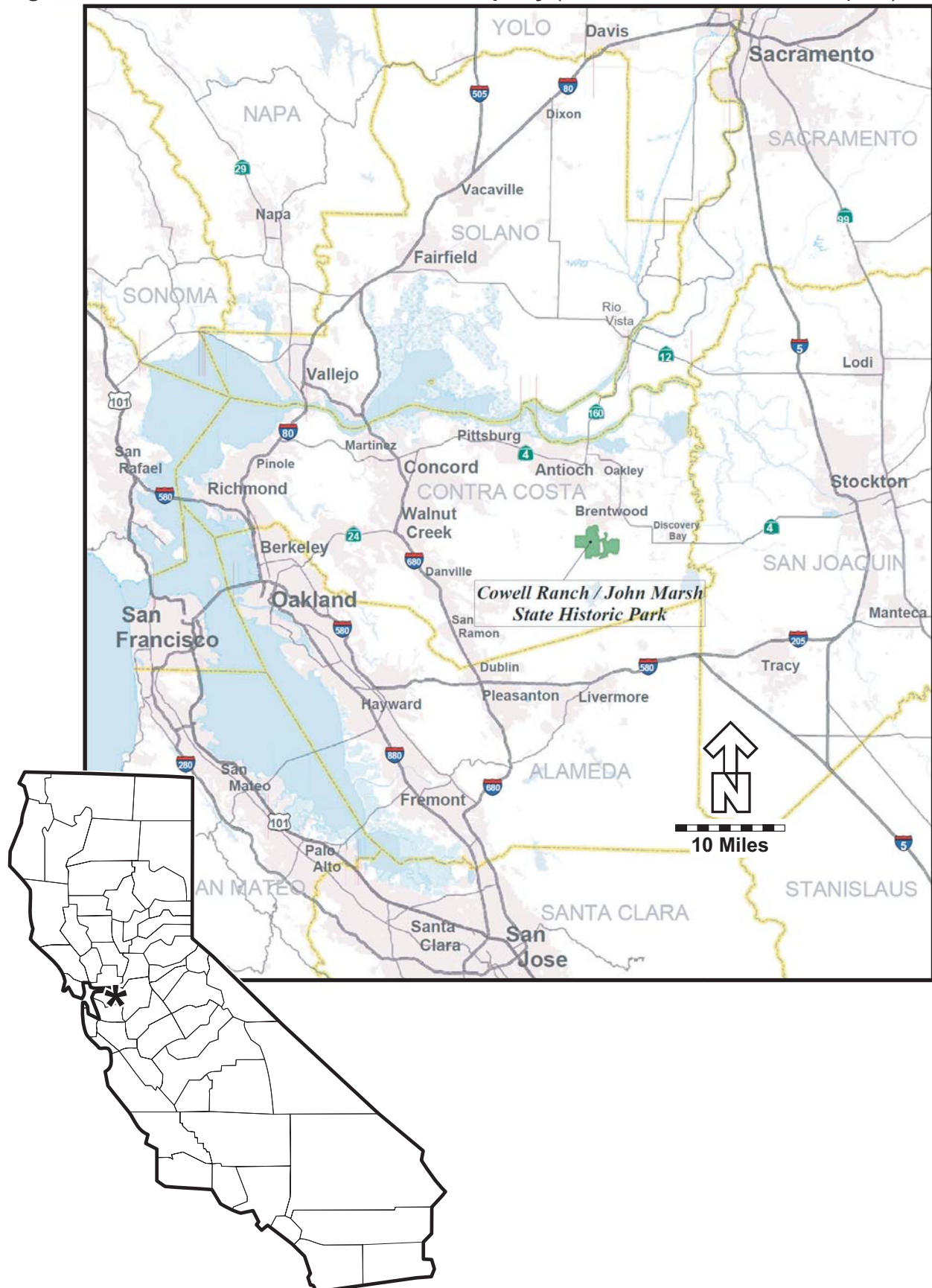
**Figure 4:** Primary Historic Zone – Alternative C/Preferred Alternative

**Attachment A:** Excerpts from Commission Statements of Policy

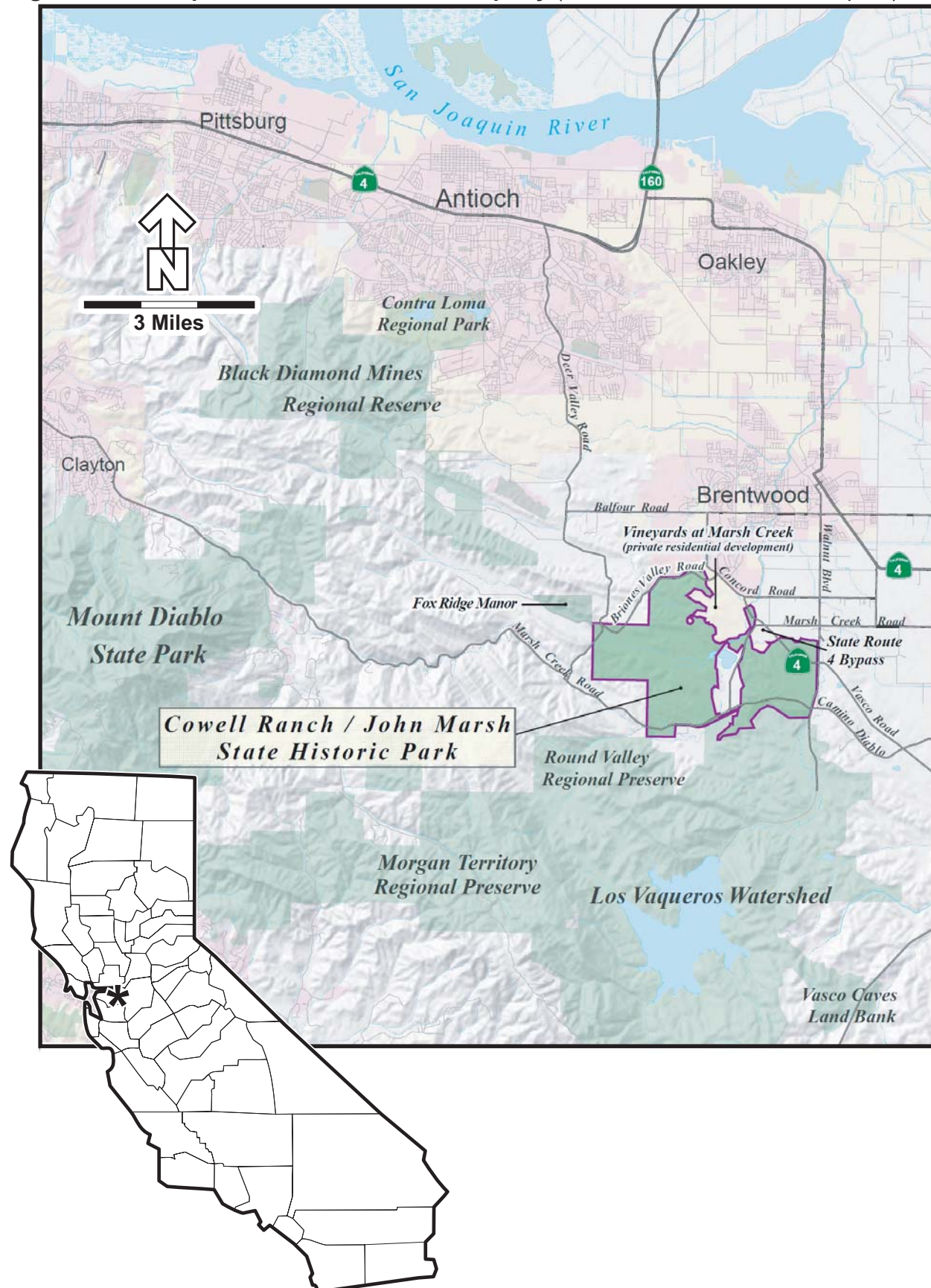
Commission Policy II.2 - *Classification and Naming of Units, Features, Groves, and Trails of the State Park System*

Commission Policy II.6 - *Agricultural Leasing*

**Figure 1: Location - Cowell Ranch/Marsh Property** (classified as a state historic park)



**Figure 2: Site Map - Cowell Ranch/Marsh Property** (classified as a state historic park)





**Figure 3: Cowell Ranch/Marsh Property showing Management Zones and sub-areas (Alternative C/Perferred Alternative)**

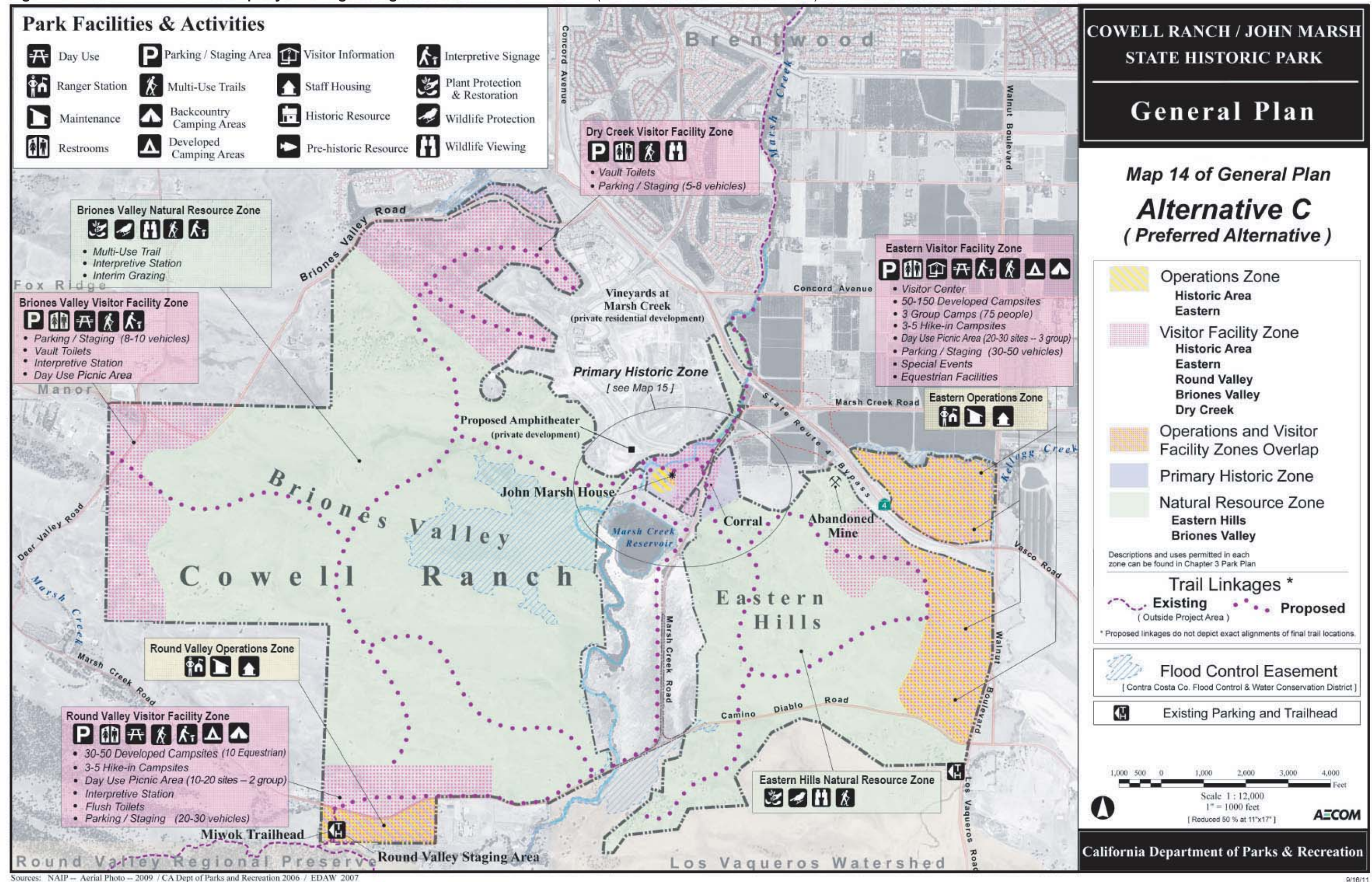
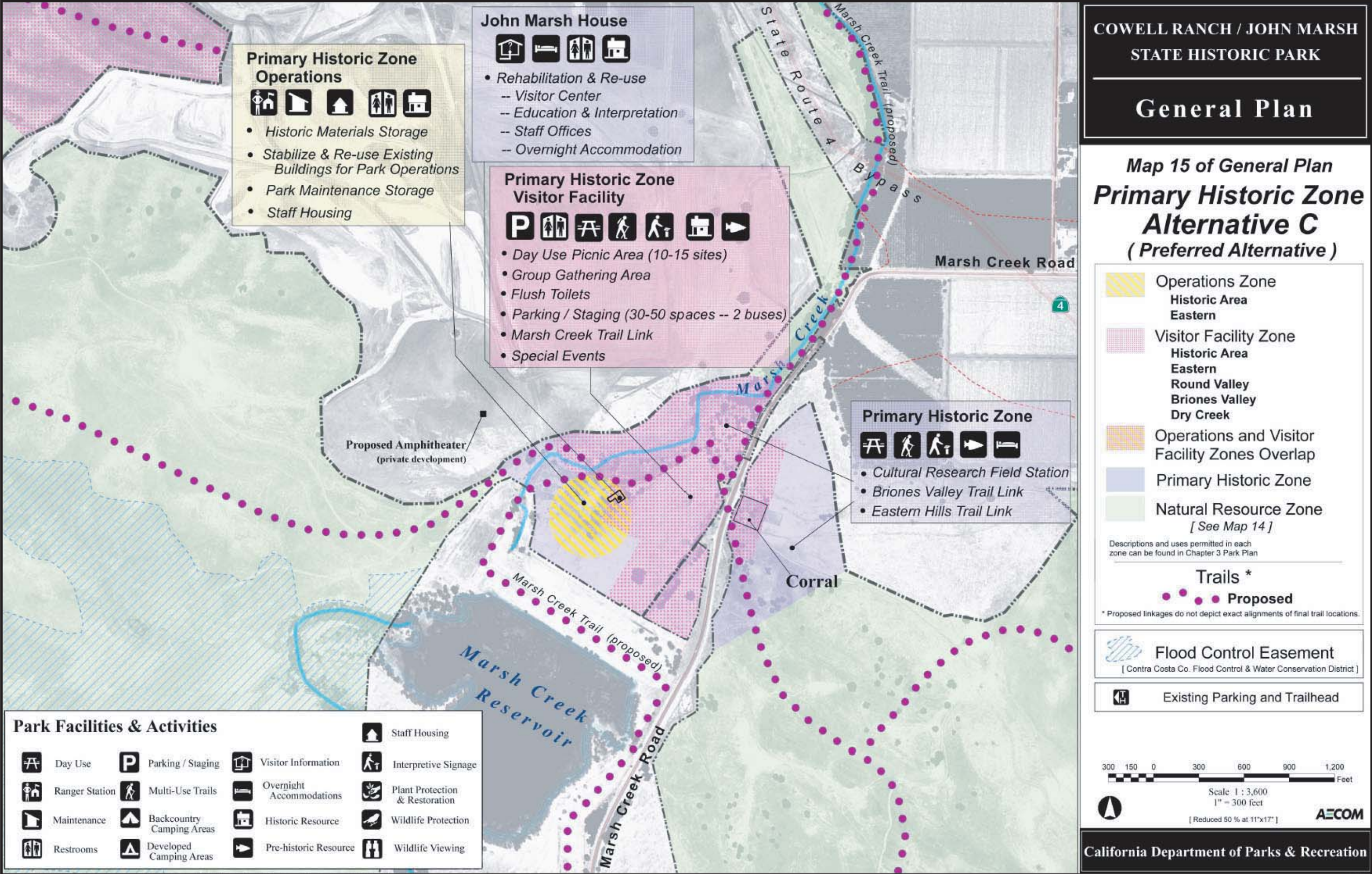




Figure 4: Cowell Ranch/Marsh Property showing Management Zones and sub-areas - Primary Historic Zone detail - (Alternative C/Perferred Alternative)



Sources: City of Brentwood -- Color Aerial -- August 2005 / CA Dept of Parks and Recreation 2006 / EDAP 2007

9/16/11



## **Attachment A: Excerpts from Commission Statements of Policy**

### **Policy II.2 CLASSIFICATION AND NAMING UNITS, FEATURES, GROVES, AND TRAILS OF THE STATE PARK SYSTEM**

AMENDED 5-4-94

The following procedure will be used to identify, classify, and name units of the State Park System:

#### **1. Unit Project Name**

A unit project name may be used by the Department of Parks and Recreation throughout the initial phase of site selection, planning, and acquisition of a unit to be added to the State Park System. The project name, so far as possible, will be based on the criteria outlined in Paragraph 3 below.

#### **2. Classification and Naming**

- a. Following the acquisition of and preparation of a resource inventory for a new unit of the State Park System, the Department will provide the secretary of the Commission with a recommendation containing the unit's permanent name and classification.
- b. The type of classification shall be governed by existing State law, principally the Public Resources Code, Division 5, Chapter 1, Article 1.7, Section 5019.53, et seq.
- c. With regard to naming, the Department's recommendation will be based on the criteria outlined in Paragraph 3 below and any existing State regulations.
- d. Upon receiving a recommendation for the classification and naming of a unit of the State Park System, the secretary of the Commission will select the time and place for holding a public hearing before the Commission for this specific purpose. The secretary will ensure that the hearing is properly announced in accordance with existing State regulations in order that the classification and naming as adopted by the Commission may be recorded and made a part of Title 14 of the California Code of Regulations.

#### **3. State Park System Unit Names**

In most cases, a unit should bear the name to which it has been accustomed due to location, association, history, natural features, or general usage. Changing the name of a classified unit is strongly discouraged. A unit may be named by the Commission in honor of a person living or deceased, or a group, organization, or other entity which has rendered services of statewide significance to the State Park System.

#### **4. Naming of Features within Units of the State Park System**

The Director may approve the use of a name to identify a feature within a unit of the State Park System when this action is necessary or desirable for any reason, such as ease in identifying a feature for users of the system, preparation of maps, recognition of deserving individuals or groups, organizations or other entities. Names so selected may be altered or changed by the Director as conditions warrant. The approval of a map or the use of a sign identifying a feature shall constitute the Director's approval and the recording of the Director's actions.

## **5. Memorial Groves**

The Commission reserves the privilege of approving the selection and names given to memorial groves within the State Park System. Sections or areas within units of the State Park System may be permanently set aside as memorial groves for any reason approved by the Commission. However, generally, memorial groves will be approved and named only to honor individuals or organizations who have donated at least \$5,000 or one-half of the present market value of the area to be named. Memorial plaques approved by the Department shall be used to identify such areas. These plaques shall include a statement of the State's participation in the acquisition of the grove if appropriate. Memorial groves will be indicated on an official map left in the headquarters of the unit concerned and in the archives of the Commission. The naming of a memorial grove will not have any effect on the area, section, or unit name of a unit of the State Park System.

## **6. Memorial Trails**

The Commission reserves the privilege of approving the selection and names given to memorial trails within the State Park System. Areas within units of the State Park System may be permanently set aside as memorial trails for any reason approved by the Commission. However, generally, memorial trails will be approved and named only to honor individuals or organizations who have donated at least \$5,000 or comparable service for trail improvements. Memorial plaques approved by the Department shall be used to identify such areas. These plaques shall include a statement of the State's participation in the establishment of the trail if appropriate. Memorial trails will be indicated on an official map in the headquarters of the unit concerned and in the archives of the Commission. The naming of a memorial trail will not have any effect on the area, section, or unit name of a unit of the State Park System.

## **Policy II.6 AGRICULTURAL LEASING**

AMENDED 5-4-94

Generally, grazing or agricultural leasing is considered incompatible in units of the State Park System. However, a general plan may include a grazing or agricultural activity that is found to be fundamental to enhancement of the visitor experience or resource values, such as historic interpretation or resource management.

The Director may, with the concurrence of the Commission, permit grazing or agriculture where it is for the benefit of the unit and consistent with its classification. The Director shall carefully weigh the environmental consequences of grazing or other agricultural leases on the natural, cultural, scenic, and recreational resources of the unit.